

East Greenwich School Committee

Minutes of the Budget Workshop for Thursday, January 31, 2013

Archie R. Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

6:35p.m. Budget Workshop

I. Call to order

The budget workshop of the East Greenwich School Committee was called to order in the library of the Archie Cole Middle School at 6:35p.m. by School Committee Chair Mr. David Green. School Committee members in attendance were: Dr. Deidre Gifford, Vice-Chair; Mrs. Susan Records; Mr. Clark Smith, and Ms. Carolyn Mark. Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters and Mr. Jack Sommer were absent. Also in attendance were Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Maryanne Crawford, Director of Administration; Mr. Robert Wilmarth, Director of Facilities; Dr. Judith Saccardo, Interim Director of Student Services, and Mrs. Tammy Walsh, Senior Accountant. Mrs. June Fischer, Finance Committee Chair; Mr. David Sullivan; Mr. Rob Bikash, Mr. Ed Pieroni, and Mr. Tom Stocker of the Finance Committee were also present.

II. Budget Workshop-Special Education

Dr. Mercurio gave an overview of the areas that are under the umbrella of Student Services (Special Education) and included in the budget. The proposed Student Services budget is a 4.11% increase

over last year. Unbudgeted items last year included two out-of-district tuitions and various purchased services (i.e. physical therapy). The tuitions were the result of two students moving into the district with out-of-district placements. The technology spending is for assistive technology devices and augmentative communication. Dr. Saccardo noted the student services technology budget is student-driven and is usually for specialized equipment. There are no proposed personnel changes, but caseloads are being reviewed and some staff may be reallocated to other areas. Dr. Saccardo explained how the district estimates student population, which is based on December enrollment figures and June graduation/completion numbers. This figure can fluctuate between five and ten students. Dr. Saccardo noted more and more students are coming in with more significant needs than in previous years.

Dr. Gifford questioned the special education budget increases for the past three to five years. Mrs. Fischer said the 2011-12 budget went up 9% and the 2012-2013 budget went up 5%. Mr. Green questioned the financial impact of students who attend private schools, but require services from the district. Dr. Saccardo explained the procedure for providing services to private school students. The Committee asked Dr. Saccardo to provide the number of students who receive services. Dr. Saccardo explained how regular education students receive services of providers who are deemed “student service” providers (i.e., social worker, psychologist). The student services budget supports students with RTI, 504s, ELL, etc. The

tutoring line covers IEP and non-IEP students, along with homebound or hospitalized students. Mr. Green questioned the increase in salaries for extended school year (65% increase for elementary). Dr. Saccardo explained that additional staff will be hired for the elementary program. Mr. Stocker asked for a spreadsheet showing projections of students leaving and students entering with significant needs. The bulk of the salary increases for paraprofessionals and teachers are due to contractual step increases. Mrs. Crawford noted there are many teachers on lower steps who will receive higher step increases.

The district will receive approximately \$325,000 for Medicaid reimbursement. Mr. Green asked Dr. Saccardo to provide details on activities that go above and beyond R.I. law and federal law in regards to requirements noting the source of the requirement.

III. Budget Workshop-Facilities

Mr. Wilmarth gave an overview of the facilities budget which is a 2% increase over last year. \$60,000 has been budgeted for a new maintenance vehicle. A 2% raise for FY2014 was negotiated for custodians and maintenance. Extra funds were budgeted for washing the windows at Cole and the high school. Mr. Wilmarth explained the facilities budget has been level-funded according to square footage for the past nine years. Overall the budget has increased 12% over the past nine years. There was a lengthy discussion regarding water usage for the fields. So far this year, the district has paid \$40,000 for water. The water and sewer bill for this year may total \$90,000 or

higher. The water should be stabilized when the fields are stabilized. Mr. Green would like to follow up with Mr. Wilmarth regarding the meter at the high school. Last year the electricity bill was offset by ESCO and was allocated in a different budget line than this year. \$276,000 has been budgeted for capital improvements. The Committee asked Mr. Wilmarth to provide a list of recommendations for improvements above and beyond what is in this budget. Mrs. Fischer offered to assist with the summary. Dr. Gifford would like a “wish list” for all other buildings. Mrs. Fischer questioned the capital reserve formula. Mrs. Crawford explained the fund balance policy which is required by GASB. This policy will be revisited at the next policy committee meeting on February 8, 2013. Revenues from renting the facilities were discussed, along with the possibility of renting the fields.

IV. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Mark, which was seconded by Mrs. Records, the Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn at 7:44p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO

SECRETARY